



# Butcher Queers



A huge thank you to everyone who turned up at 'The Meat Factory', held in Filmbase on August 7. The issue you are now holding is paid entirely from the sale of art bought by silent auction that night. This ensures that *Butcher Queers* remains advert free and can devote each page to celebrating the photography, visual art, writing and the lives of LGBTQ people living in Ireland.

A very special thanks to these artists who kindly donated their time and work free of charge: Panti, Ronan Healy, Rachel Daris, Wolf Boy, Adrian + Shane, Tag, Canvaz, Daniel Holfeld and Chris Sutton, Katherine Lynch, Pa Byrne, Maser, Paul O'Connor, Will St Leger, Brian Finnegan, Adam Crane, Garvin Gallagher, Logan McLain and Mark Black.

Our gratitude to Tag and Seán for helping us hang the work. Colin for driving us everywhere, collecting stuff and Filmbase for giving us the space. Thanks also to Panti, Gaire, GCN, Queerid.com for getting the word out.

*Butcher Queers* is a collaboration of queer writers, activists, artists, performers, photographers and thinkers. We don't advertise clubs, bars, events, products or pointless celebrities. We're interested in queer people. The things they do, things they love, things they make and say.

We would like to include your writing, art, photography, thoughts or recipes for disaster. It may suit our zine, it may not. Whatever it is, we ask that you do it with passion. Send us an email to [butcherqueers@gmail.com](mailto:butcherqueers@gmail.com) or visit or our blog at [www.butcherqueers.blogspot.com](http://www.butcherqueers.blogspot.com).

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Thanks: Brian, Jarlath, Una, Hivenman+, Karol, Adrian and Shane, Stephen, The Hive, Chris and Danny.

Will  
Curator



\* EAT OUR \*  
BONBOMBS



Above: 'One of the Fanny Bandits showing the group's symbol; 'xVx'

“Oh, the scene is so small!” People say, “the scene is so small” to prevent themselves from fucking around because, in Gay Land, everyone knows who you fucked (ever), who you want to fuck, who you’re fucking and who wants to fuck you. And despite the fact that most information intended to be confidential always ends up being public knowledge, some people want to at least maintain some privacy. This is in order to build the guise that they are not sluts. But everyone is a slut. Even if the acts of slutism are only carried out in their minds. But that’s beside the point. Because the scene isn’t ‘so small’ anymore. In fact, it’s rather rapidly expanding.

You can only really clock it anecdotally. There isn’t much research (okay, ANY) research done into how many more lesbians there are in the clubs week to week. But anyone who has been out and about for the last few years will consistently tell you, ‘The lesbians are coming’. A few years ago the same old lesbian faces cropped up in every gay bar and gay club night and gay event; now do a lap in Kiss at the Tivoli and you wonder, “who are all these people?” This swiftly evolves to, “how do I not know all these people,” to, “these new people are hawt.”

So, why and how is this happening? Are we witnessing an explosion in the numbers and visibility of gay women that mirrors the similar rapid outing and partying of gay men in Dublin in the ’90s? Probably.

The lesbian scene turns on the cogs of well-oiled cliques. [Aside: Groups of lesbian friends presume that are THE group of lesbian friends. The surrounding beings are just people who are not in their group yet, or hangers on, or weirdos, or losers, or people who had been in the group at some stage but were isolated and evicted for fucking someone’s girlfriend (usually the girlfriend of someone more popular than them). It is this viciously territorial and image-conscious entourage dynamic that makes groups of gay chicks not very dissimilar from the cast of *Mean Girls*, but with more alcohol and less bus accidents. I know, right?] Now with numbers growing, those cliques are being broken, which is the best thing that can happen to a scene. To survive, it has to be disturbed, smashed up a bit, made uncomfortable.

So back, back, back... Why is this happening? Population growth? Yeah. A generational thing? Sure. Previously, women only came out

in their late 20s and 30s. Now you see teen dykes in The George. That’s a change. Believe it. The sexualisation of women as a whole – gay and straight – has changed things too. Singledom drives the lesbian scene. Even more so than it drives the male gay scene. Lesbians in relationships become rare social animals. The volume of single gay women (reflecting, perhaps, the large population of single women overall in Dublin, gay or straight) coupled with a younger generation of gay women is driving the lesbian economy.

**“If guys have sex on television, they are gay. If girls fuck, they are experimenting.”**

The acceptance of diversity is important to note too. A decade ago, to be a lesbian, you had to be butch. Anyone in their mid-20s will speak of the fear of going to the George or the Front Lounge for the first few times and seeing only butch lesbians. If you weren’t butch, you were different. Now butch is becoming unfashionable [Aside: If you think I’m labelling too much here, nobody revels in pigeonholing like the gays. For all our anti-establishment ways, there is a remarkable conservatism at work on the gay scene. Twinks, queens, bears, baby dykes, butches, femmes, everything has to be labelled to be understood. Pity the poor bisexuals, who are scoffed at and labelled as indecisive gays (bi is just a bus stop on the way to Gay Town, and all that), not people with a legitimate sexuality. Gay people? Inclusive? Ha! And that’s not even broaching heterophobia]. Butches, traditionally a majority on a lesbian scene, are now a minority. It is acceptable now to be a ‘different kind’ of lesbian, and that sure as fuck is pushing up the numbers.

But perhaps the biggest catalyst that is driving the collective coming out of women in Dublin is something that we have no control over. It’s how the rest of society views lesbianism. Lesbianism is starting to be accepted by non-lesbians.

TV – where most kids get their information about how sex and sexuality – reduces lesbianism to a fleeting indiscretion or phase. If guys have sex on television, they are gay. If girls fuck, they are experimenting. Incidentally, they always



seem to just kiss, and not fuck. But now, you can read in a newspaper about Lindsay Lohan and her girlfriend, and it's kind of like, so, whatever.

Lesbianism is cool now. Which helps. You only had to read that recent daft feature in the *Sunday Times Style Magazine* on how to dress like a dyke. Listen up! You too can dress like Agyness Deyn! Cropped hair! Docs! Braces! Earth to *The Sunday Times*: Deyn 'aint no dyke. But, hey, it doesn't matter; she kinda looks like one. Deyn is cool, henceforth what she is channelling (lesbianism) is kind of cool too.

That perception in the media that lesbianism is cool and can't be slagged off anymore cannot be underestimated, because the media rules sexuality. The fact that a few years ago Marissa on *The OC* had a lesbian kiss has far more of a cultural and social impact than legislation or equal rights ever could. Believe it.

**"The Fanny Bandits are concentrating on alerting the lesbian community to what's going on"**

Apart from the proliferation of lesbian clubs, collectives are beginning to form too. This indicates how rapidly the scene is developing, because a scene is only a scene when it has an alternative or anti-scene. Top of the pile are the Fanny Bandits, an irreverent bunch of lesbians who roam the young scene. Boisterous little things, they're all elaborate handshakes, over acted chauvinist struts – one part hip-hop, one part *L Word*; pill-necking, carnage-causing loudmouths. They are the scamps of the gay scene. They have all been thrown out of gay clubs for a number of offences, which can range from getting caught smuggling a naggin of vodka into the smoking section of The George, mistakenly spilling poppers on the general manager of The Front Lounge, to starting a fight in Kiss, to having sex in the toilets of Sin, to puking on the dance floor at Glitz. The Fanny Bandits are concentrating on alerting the lesbian community to what's going on, graffiti (their tag, FYI is something like this: xVx), and awarding Internet kudos to hot lezzers they come across.

They're smart too, and their anonymous leader agrees that the scene is almost unrecognisable every six months as it develops.

"Back in the '90s, it seems as though the majority of women who were coming out were in their late 20s and 30s; some married with kids," she says. "It was probably a lot more difficult to identify as a lesbian down to the whole 'les. be.friends' syndrome. I think that with the sexual freedom of the '90s and the acceptance and visibility of gay males, it made us able to recognise something and get away from the 'Oooh, I just admire her' attitude and realise that you want to tap it all night long."



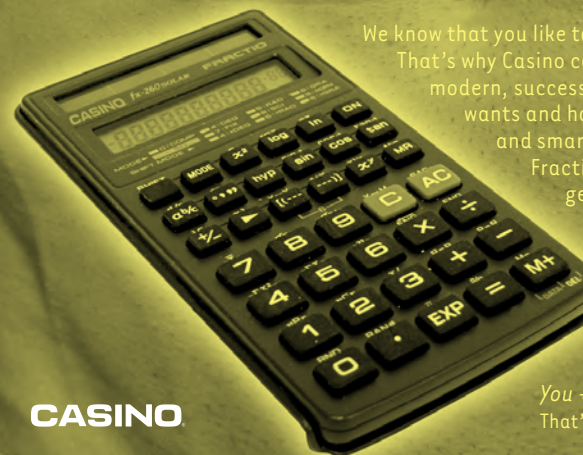
Cue obligatory reference to the largest influencer in all things dyke, the popular culture lesbian firebomb that is The L Word.

"The visibility of normal lesbians in shows like *The L Word* has done huge things for us, getting away from the kd lang-stroke-Melissa Etheridge thing," says our Fanny Bandit friend. "I think it's just all about being able to be, being able to be recognised as what you are and not having to hide it. Lesbianism was always hidden away even further then the gay male thing because it was a lot less obvious."

There is a comical crudeness that all young movements and scenes enjoy. There is no art to it; it's remarkably uncomplicated. Just more people, more diversity, more pussy, more friends. Dublin is an exciting place to be a dyke right now. Don't believe me? Do a lap in the fucking club, kid

Una Rocks: <http://unarocks.blogspot.com>  
Fanny Bandits: [www.bebo.com/scissormetimberz](http://www.bebo.com/scissormetimberz)

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I love you





Above: Self portraits by Adrian + Shane

**S**hane is waiting at the train station when *Butcher Queens* arrives in Drogheda. We take a spin in his funky mini to the smart looking apartment that he shares with Adrian, his love and partner of over ten years. You can tell that these two guys are comfortable with themselves, their attitude is really laid back. The walls of their home are dotted with a mixture of multi-layered stencils and stylish black and white photography. Adrian puts the kettle, Shane arranges some biscuits on a plate and we sit down at the kitchen table for coffee and a chat.

**BQ: How did you two meet?**

**Shane:** I came home for Christmas holidays from Glasgow, I was studying Architecture in the Glasgow School of Art. I headed out with friends to a club and Adrian was there with a mutual friend. We were introduced to each other on the dance-floor, we shook hands as ABBA-esque sang *Gimme-Gimme-Gimme* (a man after midnight) played."

**BQ: You've been together for over 10 years, when did the creative part of your relationship begin?**

**Adrian:** When we first met, Shane was studying in Glasgow. Six or seven weeks after we met I went over to visit for a few days. I brought a sketch pad with me and one evening we drank loads of vodka (which I had bought from the duty free on my way to Glasgow) and without discussing it, we just began making art. Cutting photos from magazines, making collages and painting and drawing over it. During my first brief visit to Glasgow we created ten works of art. Some better than others. They're still in the pad. Maybe we'll use them in an exhibition some day.

**Shane:** We didn't talk about it, it just happened. The night ended with me passing out, very drunk on blackcurrant vodka. Adrian missed his flight home the next day.

**BQ: If you had a can of petrol and a box of matches, what piece of art would you set on fire?**

**Adrian:** When I visit certain people's houses, I've noticed some vile, framed 'art prints' (that they bought in a furniture shop) hanging on the wall. I'd be happy to burn those... but they're not really art!

**Shane:** Years ago, I worked as a gallery assistant and one day, as I was setting up an exhibition, I lifted a heavy sculpture and twisted my back, resulting in a back operation and three years off work. I would gladly take a match to that sculpture.

**BQ: Several of your pieces document your lives together, how aware are you of this?**

**Adrian:** Initially, we weren't aware that this is what we were doing... our art has always been a record of our existence. Evidence. It's something that I'm very interested in. We are constantly photographing our lives. It's like a great big visual diary.

**Shane:** It's not something we set out to do. It really just started from the beginning: recording what we like, where we are and what's surrounds us. So we kinda bring ourselves into the art, it just seemed natural.

**BQ: When you fight or you're not talking to each other what happens to the creative work?**

**Shane:** Well honestly, we very rarely fight, we are too fucking lazy. If we have to work to a deadline then we just have to get on with it. But if we were just working in general on something and we fell out, well, we'd just walk away from it 'til we were sorted again.

**Adrian:** When we have a fight, we don't make art.

**BQ: Shane, How did you get interested in transforming waste materials into iconic furniture?**

**Shane:** It's something that happened from when I was young. My Dad would always look in jumbo bins (that sounds terrible), and I was just fascinated with what people discarded. I love the idea of taking something and transforming it. It was never anything to do with recycling, more re-working an object.

**BQ: Adrian, you work with detailed multi-layered stencils. What drew you into this medium?**

**Adrian:** I was first introduced to stencil art on a trip to Australia in 2005. The back streets of Melbourne are filled with amazing, inspiring graffiti and stencil art. I took hundreds of





Left to right:: Self portraits by Adrian and Shane

photos and when I came home I began creating my own stencils. A lot of the stencil art I saw was made up of only one or two layers. But I wanted to add more detail and colour to my images so I use more layers.

Some of my stencils are made up of eight or nine layers, so the cutting-out process can take ages, but it's always worth it in the end.

**BQ: Shane, what does Adrian do to inspire you?**

**Shane:** He hits me! Eh, no, he doesn't. He's very honest, which is good. If Adrian doesn't like an idea he will say it's straight away. No pretending. Just straight out. Which just pushes me to go away and come back with something better. It's challenging as well as encouraging, because I'm quite stubborn when I know something will work, and I need to prove it and show it.

**BQ: Adrian, what does Shane do to inspire you?**

**Adrian:** Shane is very positive. He's spiritual. He tells me that I can do anything and be anything I want. Being around such positive energy can only make good things happen.

**BQ: Was there any time in your life that you hated being gay?**

**Adrian:** I came out to my parents in 1998 and a few days later George Michael was arrested in LA for flashing his cock at a cop in a public toilet. That was a bit embarrassing.

**Shane:** No, never. I would not have 'me' any other way. Actually, maybe a stone more muscle please, see, I love being gay.

**BQ: Arian, What's the worst thing you've ever called Shane?**

**Adrian:** Fat!

**BQ: Shane, What's the worst thing you've ever called Adrian?**

**Shane:** Oh, I don't resort to name calling, I use my fists!

Links:

[www.adrianandshane.com](http://www.adrianandshane.com)

[myspace.com/adrianandshane](https://myspace.com/adrianandshane)

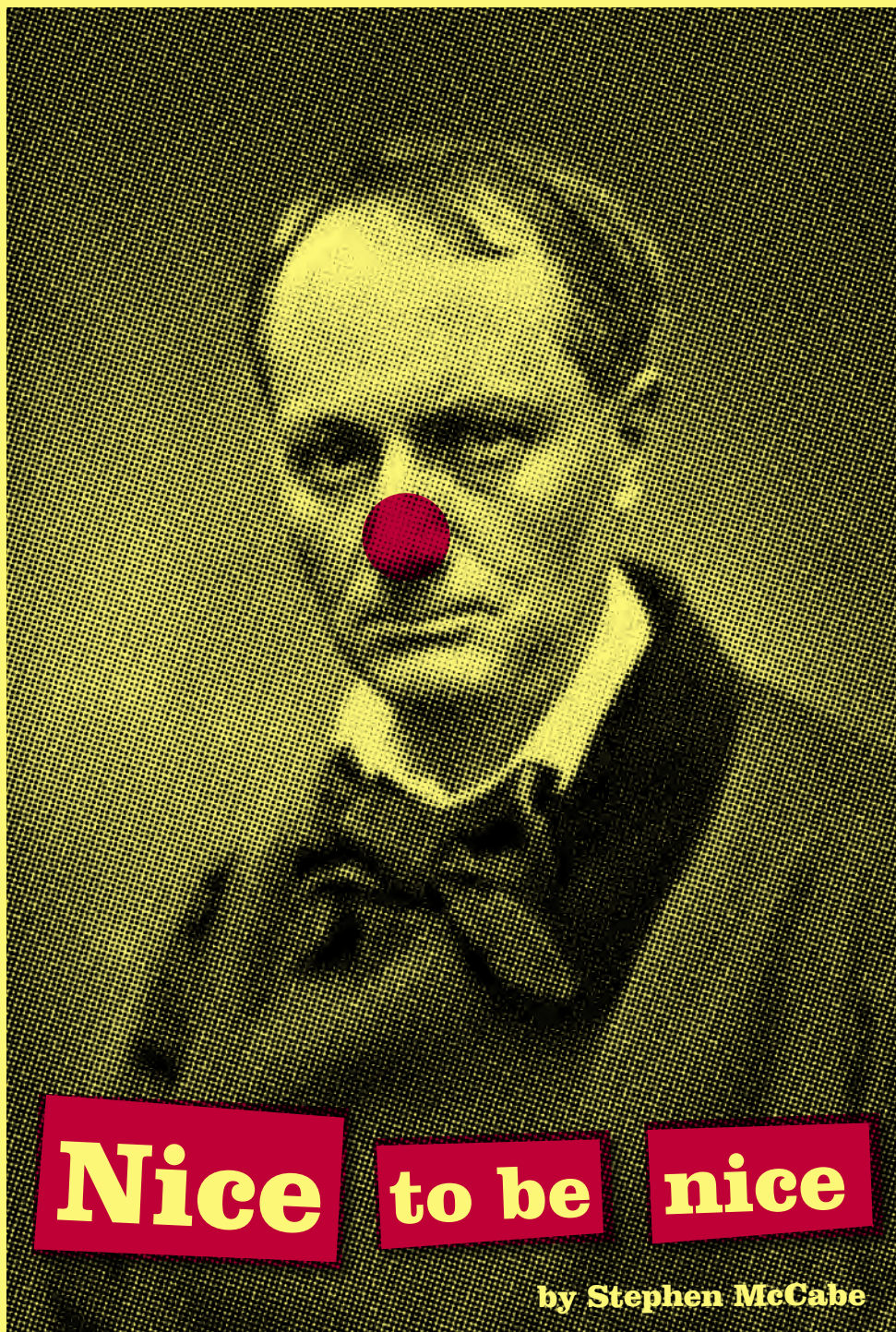






Above: Self portraits by Adrian + Shane





Above : 'Baudelaire-ious' by Will St Leger. Based on photo of french poet and hedonist Charles Baudelaire

**T**here are lots of criticisms levelled against us a community. Some of them are valid, some not so much. But there is one thing we have got to put our hands up and own. We're a cliquey bunch, not prone to extending the hand of friendship outside of our own groups.

Launching yourself onto 'the scene' often proves to be quite a difficult task, especially if, like me, you had no gay mates. However, what I lacked in mates back then, I more than made up for in teenage naivety. See, I always thought that once you went inside a gay bar it would be no time before you acquired yourself a coterie of gay friends. My belief was derived from TV shows like *Queer As Folk*, which presented gay bars as totally accessible and full-to-the-brim with friendly people.

So I was 16, sick of hell-holes like Frazer's (in my defence it was the only place which didn't ask for ID, which instantly made it cool back in the days of underage drinking) and sick of narrow-minded, straight mates who I was just waiting for an opportunity to ditch.

I decided to take the plunge and go to a gay bar and find my peeps. I didn't really have a mental image of who my people should be. The standard was set very low; the only attributes I was looking for was gay and fab – you know, likeminded people

There was a fatal flaw to my plan: My choice of bar. With absolutely no preconceived ideas about the place, the first bar I entered was the now-defunct, Out on the Liffey. Now, that establishment was bad even at the best of times, but I had decided upon a Bank Holiday Monday to grace it with my presence. I stood at the doorway, all 5ft-nothing of me, surveying the assembled misfits who shuffled uneasily around the premises. 'This can't be right,' I thought. In terms of warping my perception of the scene, Out on the Liffey did its job and then some. Suddenly Frazer's didn't seem so bad.

The worst thing about being a naive teenager is you have yet to acquire the ability to trust your instincts. See, my instincts were telling me to retreat; that there was no way I was going to find fab people in this place, yet the part of me desperately wanting to participate in something existing within an adult sphere (like a gay bar) was telling me to proceed.

The place seemed so surreal and so very un-gay. There was not a glitter ball in sight.

And none of the people in there conformed to my quaintly conceived stereotypes. Despite the fact that all evidence pointed towards the increasing likelihood that I was not going to find my 'peeps', I suppressed my creeping doubt and made my way for the bar.

If I had have been in one of those soppy, gay-coming-of age movies, usually shown on TV3 on a Wednesday evening, this would have been the pivotal moment in the plot. Within seconds I would have been met by some friendly gays, who in no time would have become my posse.

**"See, I always thought that once you went inside a gay bar it would be no time before you acquired yourself a coterie of gay friends"**

But this wasn't one of those movies. This was the 'The Liffey' on a Bank Holiday Monday. I don't think I need to paint too vivid a portrait – we've all been there. It's not pretty. However, I was there, so I decided to stay and have a drink. Thankfully the bar staff were as casual in their adherence to the law as they were in Frazer's and I got myself a vodka and Coke in no time flat.

If my dear Mother knew that rather than studying for the junior cert 'with a friend,' I was cruising gay bars, drinking vodka and all at the tender age of 16, she would have been apoplectic. At the very least, discovery of this would have been a catalyst for one of her dreaded 'front-room chats' – the likes of which she reserved for gross infractions of her rules. Back in her unreconstructed days, this definitely counted as an infraction and was most definitely gross.

Once I had the drink, I didn't know what else to do. And thus I became that sorry state that we see every night in any gay bar: the sad loner. Of course I didn't covet the role; I felt I had been horribly miscast.

The only thing that saved me from the abyss was my fundament belief that I was destined for bigger and better things. I knew I had to suck it up and accept the crappy role in the belief that my obvious talent would be spotted and I would be treading the boards with the A-list in no time. I may have lacked mates, but dammit, I made up for it in self-belief.



I can't really remember much about the experience, except that I felt like an absolute fool. As Morrissey says, "Shyness is nice, but shyness can stop you from doing all the things in life that you'd like to". On the other side of the coin there was nobody in the place that, had I not been crippled by shyness, I would even have attempted conversation with. I'll run the risk of sounding snooty but they were not my peeps.

The only person who approached me was an aging queen who in the middle of offering me drugs kept rubbing his hand up and down my leg — each time edging dangerously closer to my crotch.

**“as soon as we get our gay group of mates we instantly erase that memory of ourselves when we weren't all that”**

I must have stayed there for, like, two hours and drank, like, five drinks. So not only was I in a gay bar, alone, 16 and surrounded by edgy people on come-downs; I was now drunk. This was a plan that had completely failed to fulfil any of its original objectives.

So let's dwell on the 'sad loner' aspect of this tale and place it in a wider context. I'm not a masochist, after all.

We've all seen the sad loners out and about and at some point, in our 'gay evolution', we've all been that sad loner. Yet surprisingly none of us seem moved to help the lonely people — unless, of course, they're hot. (Then we can't wait to 'gay it forward'.) It's like, as soon as we get our gay group of mates we instantly erase that memory of ourselves when we weren't all that, when we stood in gay bars alone.

Every now and again, whilst out and about, I'll notice one of them in a bar. Sometimes I don't give them a second thought. Then on other times they tweak my conscience and I'll feel bad for them. Yet I have never approached any of them. It would be very easy to do so, so why don't I?

That's the big question. How much of a responsibility do we have towards people who are having difficulty, for want of a better word, integrating themselves on to the scene? Of course it's unreasonable to say it's an absolute duty. But we are so fond of talking about how much of a 'community' we are, so should we,



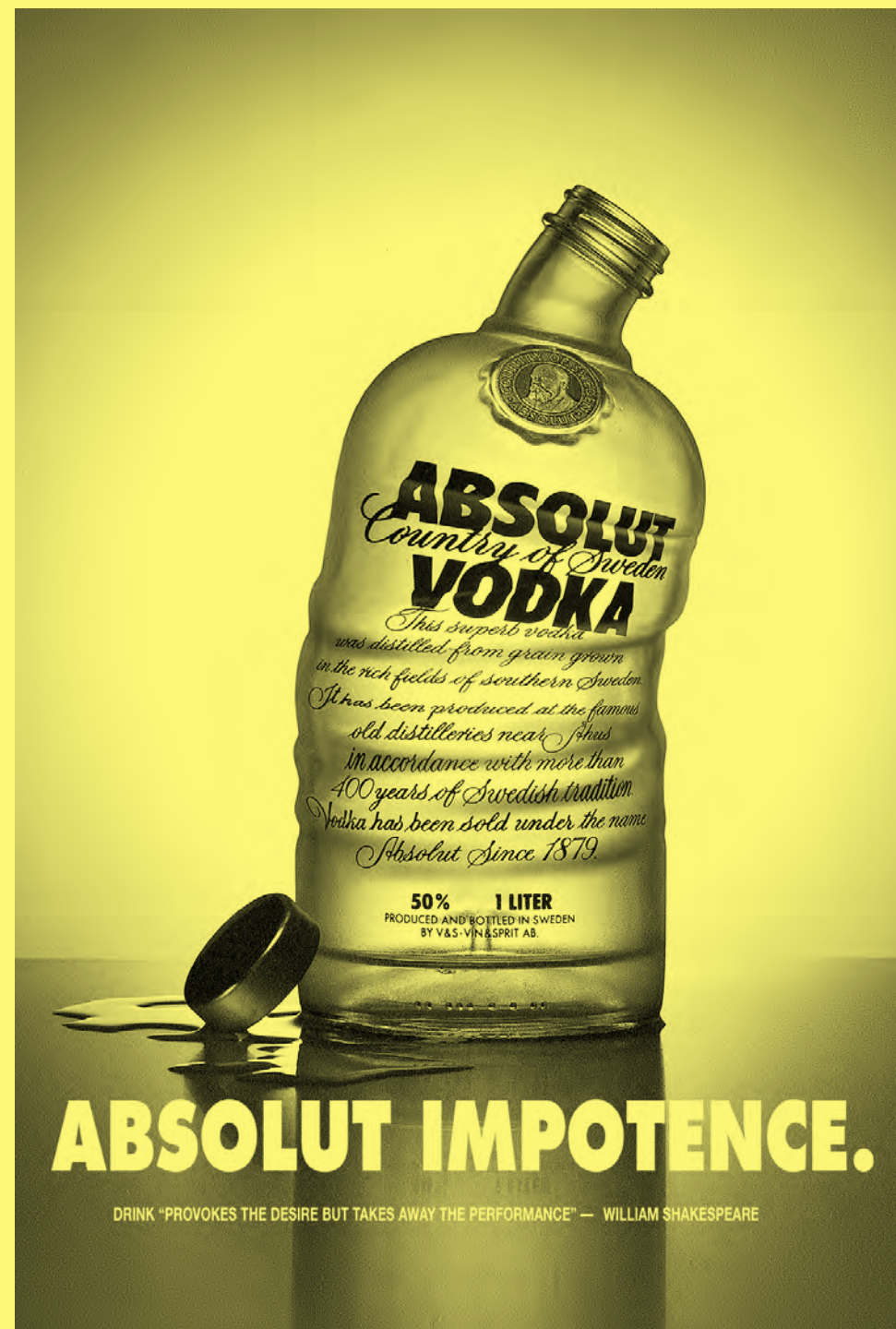
at least, try and foster a culture where we at least make an effort to help people find their feet.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not advocating a collective embrace of society's whack-jobs. Very often a loner is alone for a reason. But when it comes to gay bars and loners, I don't think the same rules, which I vigorously uphold outside this arena, should apply. A twentysomething in a gay bar on his tod is not necessarily a weirdo who is to be avoided like a proverbial wreck-the-head. He could quite plausibly be charm personified; but sadly just lacking in gay-mates, who, let's face it, are kind of essential to a successful gay life.

Also gay bars are where it's at in terms of finding the right guy to settle down to a life of blissful happiness with. I jest, obviously. That's the type of naive rubbish you could've read in my diary when I was 16.

Gay bars are places to go to get laid, maybe meet some friends, or perhaps, if you're lucky, meet that special somebody. All of these things are the most basic human needs. The need for which is obviously far greater than the need to appear cool. So next time you see a loner out and about, abandon your own 'I'm-so-above-them attitude' and say, 'Hi'. **BQ**

stephen.mccabe27@gmail.com



Above: 'Absolut' sub-vertisement by Adbusters Media Foundation. [www.adbusters.org](http://www.adbusters.org)



# Hivenman

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Written by  
**Hivenman+**  
Illustrated by  
Will St Leger



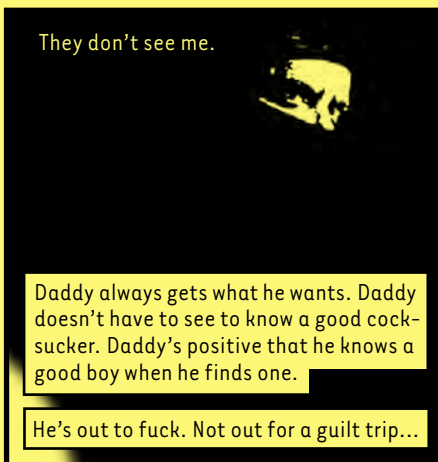
It's late, he's drunk and horny. The steam wafts until there is nothing but the thick smell of sweat, cum and blood. Off their faces, the young do anything to feel the wisdom of the old in their stomachs.



Boys want Daddy action. Daddies don't think twice.



There's a cubicle free and it's dark.



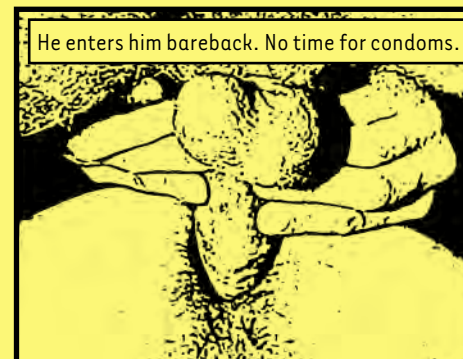
They don't see me.

Daddy always gets what he wants. Daddy doesn't have to see to know a good cock-sucker. Daddy's positive that he knows a good boy when he finds one.

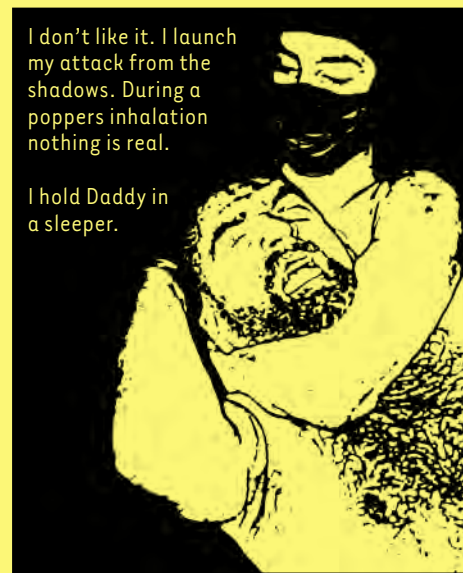
He's out to fuck. Not out for a guilt trip...



I watch them in the darkness



He enters him bareback. No time for condoms.



I don't like it. I launch my attack from the shadows. During a poppers inhalation nothing is real.

I hold Daddy in a sleeper.



No time for condoms with strangers. Faceless, nameless shame, easier to forget. Daddy is out to bare-back a twink.

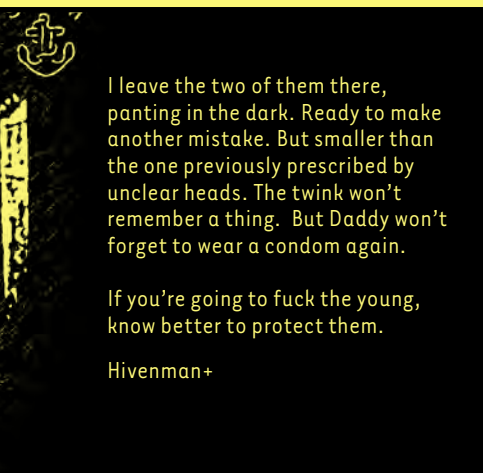


"First things first Loverboy."



I roll the condom onto his shaft like a fireman taking a kitten out of a tree.

"Now you're good to go."



I leave the two of them there, panting in the dark. Ready to make another mistake. But smaller than the one previously prescribed by unclear heads. The twink won't remember a thing. But Daddy won't forget to wear a condom again.

If you're going to fuck the young, know better to protect them.

Hivenman+

# Homophobia is a



# lifestyle choice

Iris Robinson is a Northern Irish politician. She's not very bright though because she thinks that gay people can be converted into straight people by her "lovely" psychiatrist friend. She also said that gay people are an "abomination" and they made her feel "sick" and "nauseous".

*Butcher Queers* are really worried that Iris would get so "sick" that she might just keel over and die. So we've put together the 'Iris Robinson Scale of Gay Sickness' which goes from: One, being something a little bit gay that would make her a little queasy all the way to: Ten, something so gigantically homosexual that it would have her shouting at God down the porcelain telephone.

## 1 Boyzone/Westlife... etc.

They're not all gays, but just like a coffee crème in a box of chocolates, there's nearly always one mo in a boyband. Should she catch a glimpse of the 'gay one', it could make her intolerant stomach heave a little.

## 2 Prada/Chanel... etc.

Of course these labels aren't queers, but they are popular with gays. If Iris sees someone wearing these clothes, she should turn away or else she could end up with a little bit of sick in her mouth. Ewup...

## 3 Graham Norton... etc.

With so many homosexuals on TV these days, it must be difficult for Iris to sit in front of the box without retching her supper up all over the sitee. We suggest that Iris should only watch to *The God Channel*. They're all happy clappy there, but not gay (apparently).

## 4 The Kremlin... etc.

It's a gay club in Northern Ireland Iris! Every weekend it's full of confident, well adjusted gays and lesbians having fun. If Iris goes out for a Italian, she must not venture near Donegall Street, Belfast or she'll be creating her own 'pavement pizza'.

## 5 Brokeback Mountain... etc.

Millions of people, gay and straight have gone the cinema to see this powerful, Oscar winning film about two people who fall in love with each other. Don't be fooled, it's man love! Barf... She'd end up blowing her bigoted chunks over the balcony onto the normal people in the stalls.



## 6 Elton/George Michael... etc.

Imagine Iris and Peter are having a quiet picnic with the kids and someone turns on the radio only to waft music by openly gay artists into her fragile little mind. She'd be throwing her egg sandwiches up in the bushes.

## 7 Attitude/Gay Times... etc.

More gays and lesbians have access to mainstream queer media at their local newsstand. Iris must be careful when picking up her latest copy of *Bible Bashers Monthly* as she may catch a glimpse of a toned torso on the cover of a fag mag and spew all over the daily papers.

## 8 Gay Pride, Belfast... etc.

Oh, Jesus! It's like marching season for queers! Iris better give Belfast city centre a wide berth that weekend. Just the sight thousands of gay and lesbians with their friends and families would make Iris projectile vomit like that girl in *The Exorcist*.

## 9 Internet, XTube... etc.

While using the internet, Iris must be extra careful not to type words like; 'Twink', 'Bear', 'Chicken' into Google image search with moderation filter switched off or she'd have to install windscreen wipers on her computer screen to clean off the vomit.

## 10 Everywhere... etc.

If gays make Iris "sick", we suggest that she stays indoors (forever), shouldn't watch TV, read newspapers or watch films. She could have a dinner party and invite a few like-minded people, like Robert Mugabe, Fred Phelps, David Copeland... etc. **BQ**

# Dispassion

An extract from an unpublished novel by Jarlath Gregory

Stephen and I had been lovers – or having sex, or committing twincest, or whatever you want to call it – from an early age. It began in comparative innocence when we were just seven years old, playing in the sandpit in our back garden. We looked into each others' eyes and saw ourselves. I smacked him with a plastic spade, and he laughed, and planted a slobbery kiss on my lips. Our spit mingled, bubbled, and burst. We collapsed giggling in a little blond heap, only to be pulled apart seconds later by our horrified mother, who'd come dashing from the kitchen to prise our lips apart. We'd been stoutly smacked and the incident had never been spoken of again, although it lingered unspoken in the air, culminating in bunk beds a couple of weeks later, rather than sharing a bed.

That was when we learned that some acts of love are best kept hidden. Maybe it taught us a valuable lesson, or maybe it fucked us up for life. Who knows? Either way, Stephen and I were in it together. You could argue that it all ended in tears as he turned out gay and I turned out, well, a bit weird, I admit – but, like anyone, we're normal to us.

As sure as seven years old meant making our First Holy Communion and marching up the aisle in matching suits and dickie-bows, proud as a pair of bridegrooms, we soon discovered our pre-pubescent dry erections, deeper kisses, the taste of shit. Gradually as we grew older our games became less playful. We branded each other with razorblades and cigarette burns in places where we knew no one else would see or reach. One of us might play dead as the other tried every sexual trick to resurrect his twin – fucking, sucking, torture – to make us sweat, bleed and cum in equal measure.

The attic on a Sunday night was our favourite place for sex. We sat through Sunday Mass hugging the secret knowledge of our sex lives to ourselves, and when our parents left for the pub that night, we hurried upstairs – waiting half an hour or so in case they came back for whatever reason – to undress each other in the dark and disused space.

The best sex we ever had was when I let Stephen beat and strangle me. I stood naked, legs apart, balancing on floorbeams with a thin light bathing my body. We had to be careful not to crash through the landing ceiling.

Stephen stepped towards me with the precision of a dancer. He drew a finger along my inner thigh that was just beginning to blush with a soft down. Kneeling before me, he took my balls between his lips, nuzzling my cock gently with his nose, rolling his tongue against the insane explosions of semen that began to burst in my balls. My hand grabbed instinctively to choke my erection, but his hand seized my wrist, his tongue darted towards my ass, and Stephen carefully pushed his head between my legs. His tongue probed and climbed up the crack towards the musty centre of my hole. His tongue flicked, then delved, his hand almost cracking the bones in my wrist. He drew out before my knees gave way. I opened my eyes. Stephen was back on his feet, slipping off his T-shirt. He already had tufts of coarse hair in his armpits, and greasy sweat glistened on each shaft. His chest was broader than mine, more toned, as he could play sports whilst I languished on the sidelines, nursing my damaged knee. Practised in the art of undressing with an audience, he kicked off his shoes and tugged off his socks without once losing his balance.

I was aware of the skinniness of my own almost hairless body, which seemed to visibly shrink beside his. Although we had previously been equals, his hormones were racing ahead of mine. Even the stink of Stephen's feet aroused me. He walked towards me, put his arms around my waist and held me tight, his mouth clamping mine in an unbreathable kiss. Our tongues fought, our cocks squashed against each other, but our arms locked us so firmly in place that I felt we might turn to stone, a monument to love and self obsession.

Stephen roughly broke free and lowered himself to his knees again, his hands clutching my ass cheeks and his wettened lips nibbling the tip of my cock, which ruptured in an arc of

golden piss across his face, sluicing into his eyes, his mouth, making him gag, dripping down his throat, his front.

With a swipe of one arm to my waist, he floored me. With the other fist, he boxed me smartly in the mouth. As the warmth of blood suffused my lips, I saw his dead face soften, the swell of tears, the world turned black to a smeared and salty kiss, the first kiss of honest sorrow that we'd ever allowed ourselves to know.

Stephen tenderly picked me up off the floorbeams and sat me against the attic wall. My head zoned out on stars as he reached for my belt and tightened it around my neck. He stared at me for some minutes before heaving my knees up and letting my head loll against them. He shoved his cock in my mouth a couple of times, but I couldn't suck it with all that blood still leaking out between my teeth. Then he dealt repeated blows to my skull, rhythmically, until he broke the skin on one temple and the purple cloud that bloomed across one eye pleased him. Satisfied with my appearance, he kicked me to the floor.

**“Our tongues fought, our cocks squashed against each other, but our arms locked us so firmly in place that I felt we might turn to stone”**

I fell face down and he fell on top of me, forcing down his silky tracksuit bottoms, then his moistened underwear, letting me savour the sensation of his clothes against my legs and his cock playing my back – until he shoved a couple of fingers up my ass as a guide for his erection, which he wrenched up my hole and pumped, yanking at the belt, until I felt numb from the splinters, blood, piss, bruises, pain and love that lay around us. When he was spent, Stephen drew out and tongued my hole again, caressing the blood and spunk with greedy kisses.

Then he rolled me over. I kissed him as hard as I could on his dirty mouth. He helped me to get dressed again. Now, for some reason, the broken, fucked elation I had felt at that time returned in the face of the dead girl, but I couldn't work out why.

Not knowing why disturbs me. Isobel collapsed upon me. Our breathing synchronised, heavily, as if it had to be spun from the dank undergrowth we'd made our bed. Her hair tickled my cheek and lips. I dared not look. Stephen spiralled and dissolved into the twinkling motes of memory that float in front of your eyes when you close them to the sun.

The world is full of everyday horror. Bombs explode, ripping limbs from the civilians they don't kill, burning eyes out of unlucky people's sockets, shredding brain matter to pulp or soup while it's still inside the skull. Bullets whiz through rib cages, tearing through organs, splattering innards on the ground as the gunmen trample on, seeking fresh meat to kill. Somewhere, right now, a baby is being squooshed on a spike, triumphantly held aloft like a trophy, as the soldier laughs at one more piece of vermin, terminated.

Did one more victim matter? I suppose we're all guilty of thinking our own tragedy the greatest. We can't compute the sheer scale of global terror, epic destruction or the devastation of war, and so we look to our nearest hometown horror as an example of what's wrong with the world. I felt nothing as Isobel's body heaved sleepily against mine, the smell of her ripe in the sun, mingling with heady, verdant greenery and the torrid stench of death. Kathleen didn't care that we lay there, my cock shrivelling inside Isobel, then slipping from between her thighs to rest against my hip bone, like a slug oozing its trail towards home. She didn't care that I was arrested in that instant of discovery, unsure if I was even breathing any more, or what I ought to do when normal service to my limbs and brain had resumed. The dead have it easy, having been wiped clean from this world, without the mess of emotion, thought and action to navigate.

And so I let my memories spin themselves out in spools across the breeze. For a time spent in suspended animation, as our hormones sank beyond blood, we three – Isobel, Stephen and I – slept underneath that dead girl's gaze, oblivious to the dark strains of desire that drank us deeper towards death. **BQ**

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Jarlath Gregory is the author of *Snapshots* and *G.A.A.Y. One Hundred Ways To Love A Beautiful Loser*. Grateful fans can show their appreciation with beer.



# Fag Fighters

## Zawsze Chciałem

Will St Leger talks to Polish  
artist Karol Radziszewski



Above: 'Zawsze Chciałem' (Fag Fighters) by Karol Radziszewski



**W**e like Karol Radziszewski's art. So much so that we held back this issue of *Butcher Queers* by a week to get these images of his 'Fag Fighters' for our front cover. We found his work by googling the word 'fagazine' (thanks Tag) and found it's the title of Karol's bi-lingual (Polish and English) publication, *DIK Fagazine*. The magazine, which was founded in February 2005, is edited and published by Radziszewski. "It doesn't matter if you are a boy or a girl, it doesn't matter if you are gay or straight. If you love guys, this will be your magazine," he says.

Born in Białyсток, Poland in 1980, Karol received his degree in painting at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts in 2004. He currently lives and works in Warsaw and has bounced around Europe presenting his work at major exhibitions. We got in contact with Karol and threw him a few questions.

**Butcher Queers (ENG): Tell us about your work, 'Fag Fighters'. Where did the idea of the pink balaclava come from? Could you tell us about the process of recording and photographing it?**

**Butcher Queers (PL): Opowiedz nam proszę o swojej pracy 'Fag Fighters'. Skąd wziął się pomysł na różowe kominarki? Jak wyglądały sesje zdjęciowe?**

**Karol (ENG):** The idea to create an anarchist hit squad of fag fighters was a response to the tiresome atmosphere around homosexuality in Poland, the fight for rights and the numerous, often contrary, stereotypes about fags.

I wanted to introduce a bit of chaos. I asked my grandma to knit the pink balaclavas, which is documented on the video *Fag Fighters: Prologue*. The photo sessions are usually very funny, because most of the participants are heterosexuals who do not know each other. Each time there are strong outbursts of emotions (laughter). Fag Fighters document their activities on cameras, video cameras, sometimes even a mobile – I want it to look as authentic as possible each time. When I produced one of the FF episodes in Tallinn, I invited real Estonian machos to participate. It was fun.

**Karol (PL):** Pomysł powstania anarchistycznej bojówki pedalskich bojowników był reakcją na męczącą atmosferę wokół tematu gejostwa, walki

o prawa oraz na liczne, często sprzeczne ze sobą stereotypy dotyczące pedałów. Chciałem wprowadzić trochę zamieszania. O zrobienie różowych kominarek poprosiłem moją babcię, co dokumentuje video "Fag Fighters: Prologue". Sesje zdjęciowe są zazwyczaj bardzo zabawne, bo większość uczestników jest hetero, większość nie zna się też nawzajem. Za każdym razem towarzyszą temu silne emocje (śmiech). Fag Fighters dokumentują swoje wybryki aparatami, kamerą, czasem telefonem – staram się, żeby wyglądało to jak najbardziej autentycznie. Realizując jeden z odcinków FF w Tallinie, zaprosiłem do współpracy prawdziwych Estońskich macho. Niezła zabawa.

**BQ (ENG): You say that you are interested in masculinity in art. Do you set out to capture queer/gay themes in your work?**

**BQ (PL):** Powiadasz, że interesuje cię męskość w sztuce. Czy obecność motywów gejowskich i queer jest zamierzona w twoich pracach?

**Karol (ENG):** Yes, masculinity is certainly one of the main themes. However, the consciousness that I am a professed fag often makes people perceive the things I do not as something which deals with 'masculinity' in general, but only as 'gay art'. I think it's a real problem.

**Karol (PL):** Tak, męskość to dla mnie jeden z głównych tematów. Niestety świadomość, że jestem zdeklarowanym pedałem, często przeszkadza ludziom postrzegać to co robię jako sztukę zajmującą się generalnie "męskością", a każe na nią patrzeć tylko i wyłącznie jako na "sztukę gejowską". I myślę, że to jest pewien problem.

**BQ (ENG): Is there such a thing as gay artist?**

**BQ (PL): Czy istnieje coś takiego jak artysta gejowski?**

**Karol (ENG):** Is a gay artist someone who is gay or someone who touches upon gay themes? If I make a personal film about love, the general public will not perceive it as a film about love, but a film about gay love. Such an attitude is reducing and impoverishing the artist's statement.



Above: 'Zawsze Chciałem' (Fag Fighters) by Karol Radziszewski



Above: 'Zawsze Chciałem' (Fag Fighters) by Karol Radziszewski. Right: Karol Radziszewski beneath DIK Fagazine logo.

**Karol (PL):** Czy artysta gejowski, to ktoś kto jest gejem, czy ktoś kto porusza tematykę gejowską? To jest trochę tak, że jak zrobię osobisty film o miłości, to dla większości nie będzie to film o miłości, ale film o miłości gejowskiej. Takie podejście niestety redukuje i zubaża wypowiedź artysty.

**BQ (ENG):** What was the motivation behind setting up *DIK Fagazine*?

**BQ (PL):** Co pchnęło cię do założenia *DIK Fagazine*?

**Karol (ENG):** I invented *DIK Fagazine* towards the end of 2004 and the first issue was published at the beginning of 2005. At first it was supposed to be a magazine I would like to read myself. Lots of art, nice interviews, nice guys (laughs). I also thought that it would be interesting to show the world what is going on in Central and Eastern Europe.

**Karol (PL):** *DIK Fagazine* wymyśliłem pod koniec 2004, a pierwszy numer opublikowałem na początku 2005 roku. Od początku miał to być po prostu magazyn, który sam chciałbym czytać. Dużo sztuki, dużo fajnych wywiadów, dużo fajnych facetów (śmiech). Pomyślałem też, że ciekawe będzie pokazać światu, co się dzieje w Europie Środkowo Wschodniej.

**BQ (ENG):** How does the conservative Polish society react to your work?

**BQ (PL):** Jak konserwatywne polskie społeczeństwo reaguje na twoje prace?

**Karol (ENG):** Most people try to interpret my work in a political context, but that is not interesting to me. My projects sometimes stir controversies in Poland, but generally speaking it's much better than a couple of years ago.

**Karol (PL):** Większość ludzi próbuje postrzegać to co robię w kontekście polityki, a to mnie nie bardzo interesuje. Moje projekty czasem wywołują w Polsce kontrowersje, ale generalnie jest dużo lepiej niż parę lat temu.

**BQ (ENG):** What are your plans for the future?

**BQ (PL):** Jakie masz plany na przyszłość?

**Karol (ENG):** I'm just finishing the new issue of *DIK Fagazine*, which will be devoted to Romania in its entirety. We are preparing a big fashion and art project this autumn in cooperation with designers from MARIOS. The collection will be called MARIOS DIK and all the clothes will be covered in my drawings. The DIK knickers should be a hit (laughs). I travel a lot, this year I'm going to Serbia, so perhaps the next project will be inspired by the Balkans?

**Karol (PL):** Właśnie kończę przygotowywać nowy numer *DIK Fagazine*, który będzie całkowicie poświęcony Rumunii. Na jesień szykujemy też duży projekt modowo-artystyczny w kooperacji z projektantami MARIOS. Kolekcja będzie się nazywać MARIOS DIK i wszystkie ciuchy będą pokryte moimi rysunkami - hitem powinny być DIKowe majtki (śmiech). Bardzo dużo podróżuję, w tym roku jadę m.in. do Serbii, więc może kolejny projekt będzie inspirowany właśnie Bałkanami? **BQ**



Links: [www.dikfagazine.com](http://www.dikfagazine.com)  
[www.karolradziszewski.blogspot.com](http://www.karolradziszewski.blogspot.com)



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